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# THE CLAN CAMERON

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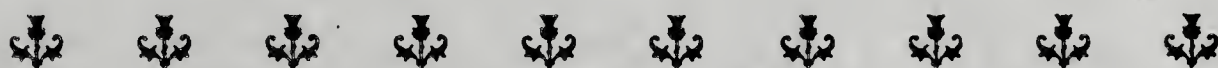
BY

CHARLES IAN FRASER  
OF REELIG, M.A.

*Albany Herald*

With Tartans and Chief's Arms in Colour, and a Map

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THE GLAN CAMERON

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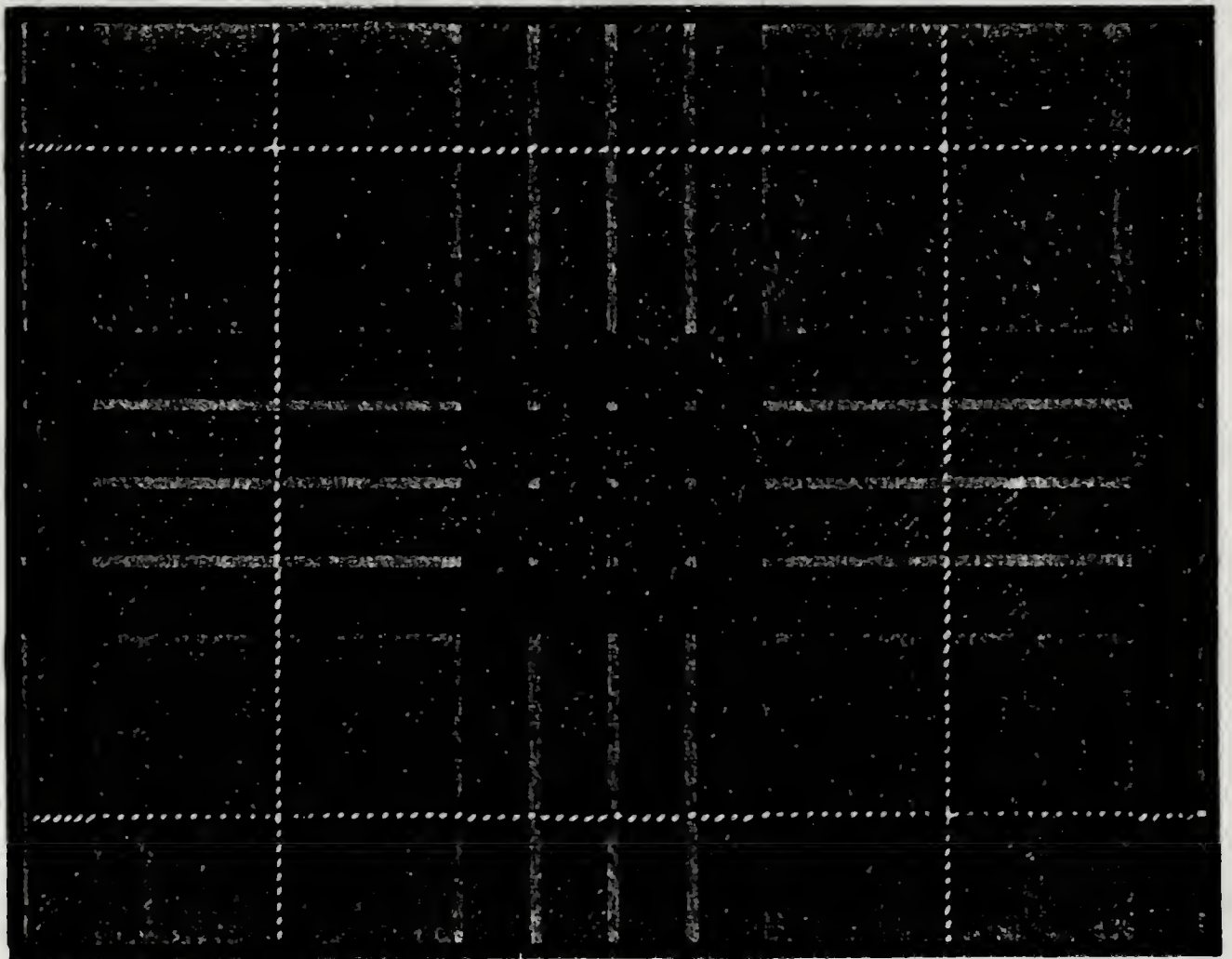
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JOHNSTON'S CLAN HISTORIES



THE CLAN CAMERON



C. I. FRASER OF REELIG



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NET



## Scottish Clansman Dies

INVERNESS, Scotland, Oct. 11 (Reuters)—Sir Donald W. Cameron of Lochiel, 74, chief of the Cameron Clan, died in a hospital here tonight.

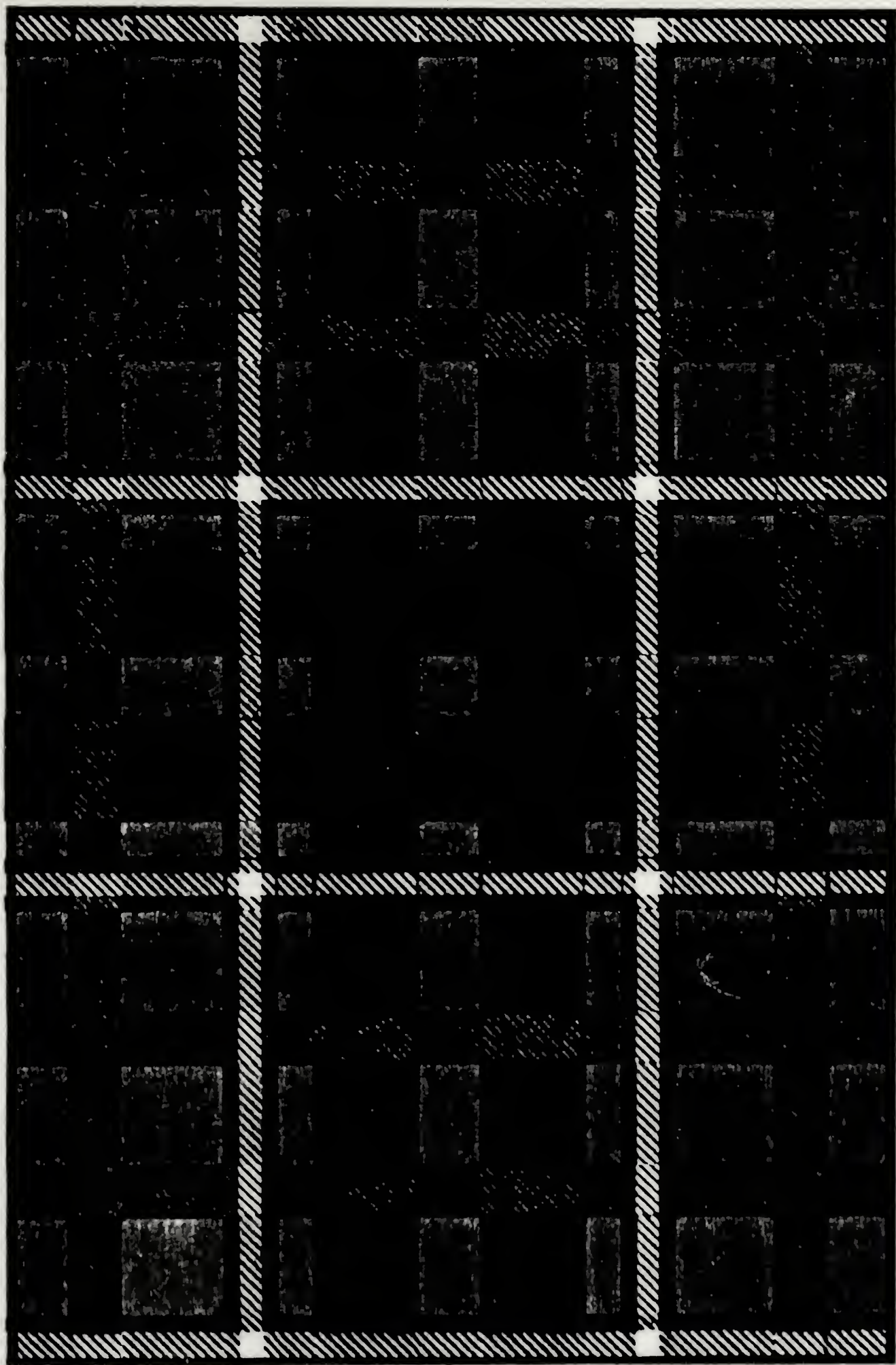
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CAMERON OF LOCHIEL

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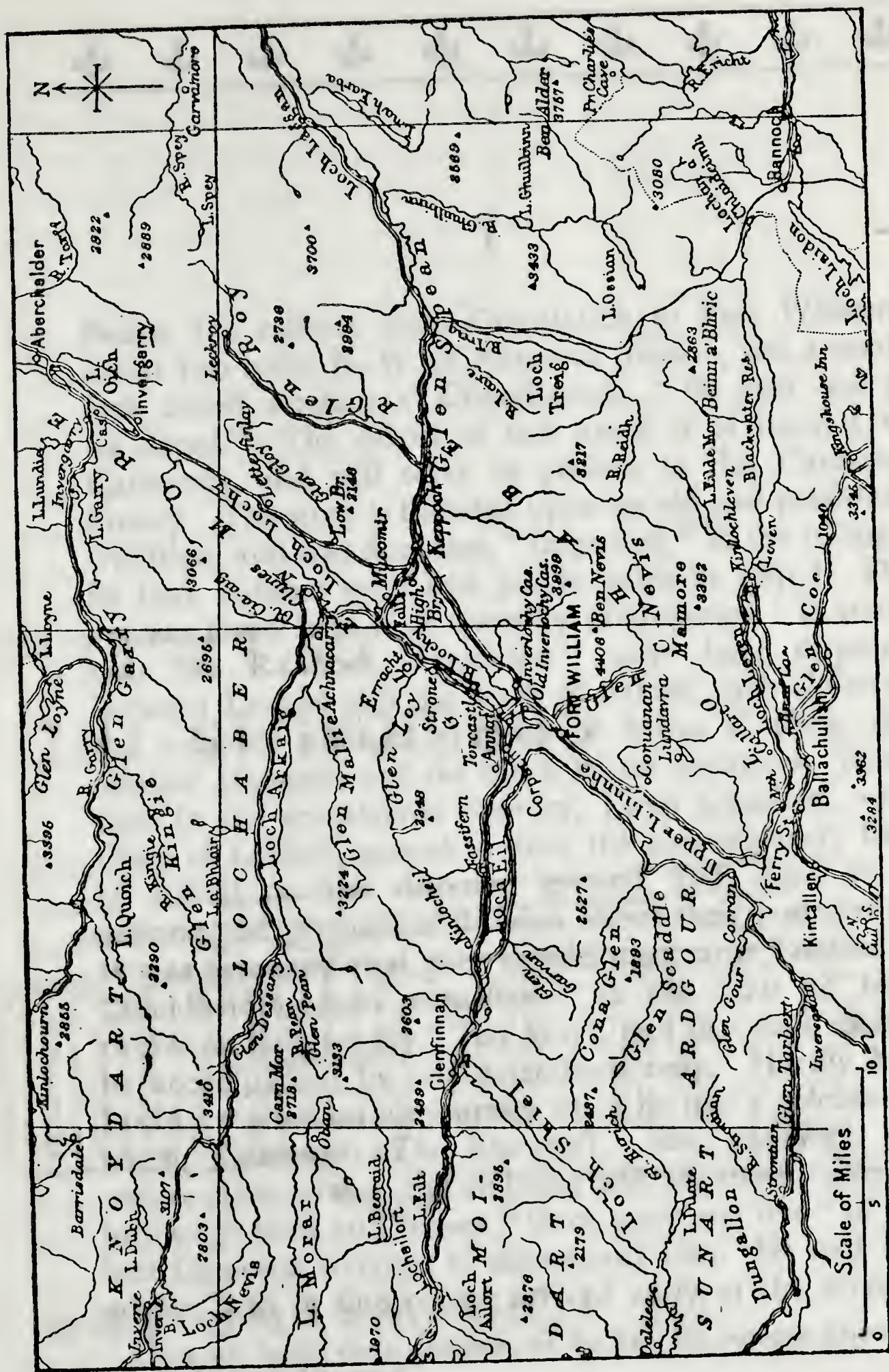
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## I

BESIDE the railway from Crianlarich to Fort William, about two miles N.-W. of Rannoch Station, lies a small loch called Lochan a' Chlaidheimh, "*the little loch of the Sword.*" The origin of this name is of interest to Camerons, and will serve as preface to this Cameron history. The story is founded upon an old and persistent tradition, and was doubtless "improved" in the telling; its bare outlines were first put in print in 1831.<sup>1</sup> The version given here is of necessity abbreviated. It states that the Rannoch "marches" were long disputed between Lochiel and the Earls of Atholl, each claiming the valuable summer grazings of Beinn a' Bhric (*the Speckled Mountain*) and the Black Water meadows. Some time in the seventeenth century, Ewen Cameron, 17th Chief of Lochiel, agreed to meet the contemporary Earl of Atholl on the disputed ground and come to a definite and permanent decision about their boundaries. It was arranged that they should meet near Lochan a' Chlaidheimh—then nameless—"at the hour of high twelve on Beltane day" (1st May), and that each should be accompanied by two attendants only. Hardly had Lochiel started on his journey when he met a celebrated witch, Gormsuil (*The Blue-eyed*). She enquired the nature of his errand, and on being told, she sternly warned him to go back and collect "three score and five" of the best Cameron warriors to accompany him. He took her advice, and in due course arrived early at the trysting

<sup>1</sup> It is said in the *Gaelic Messenger*, ed. by Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod (W. R. M'Phun, Glasgow).





place, where he concealed all his men but two, and told them to remain concealed unless he gave a certain signal. Then, with his two companions, he kept his appointment with Atholl as agreed. Their mutual discussion soon became an angry dispute. Atholl suddenly gave a signal, and fifty hidden Atholl warriors appeared, and halted at some little distance. Instantly Lochiel gave his own signal, and his more numerous Camerons, who were even nearer to hand, bounded down the hill towards him, spoiling for a fray. Atholl realised that his stratagem had failed. He drew his sword, kissed it, and then and there renounced, and for ever, all claim that he and his successors might have to the disputed grazings. This done, he kissed his sword again and tossed it into the lochan, saying that it should ever remain there as witness of his pledge. Thus the lochan acquired its name.

Atholl and his successors kept his solemn pledge, but the story has a curious sequel. Early in the nineteenth century, during a dry summer, a herd boy found a rusty sword in the shrunken waters of the lochan. It was taken as a curiosity to the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ross, Minister of Kilmonivaig (from 1776 till his death on 15th October, 1822). But when the news of the finding of the sword became public, the men of the Cameron country chose twelve delegates, four each from Loch Arkaig, Lochyside, and Nether Lochaber, and waited upon Dr. Ross. To him they explained that they wished to replace the sword in the lochan, from which it should never be removed. Dr. Ross gave it to them, and in the presence of the whole twelve it was thrown back into Lochan a' Chlaidheimh. Both the traditional story and its sequel are remarkable, not so much for their superstitious element, but because they illustrate the immense importance of valuable grazings to a Highland community.

It has been the misfortune of Highlanders, among them





the Camerons and their own especial foes, that so much has been made of their feuds, and so little of the reasons for them. We now know the origin of many feuds to have been economic rather than personal. They frequently arose because the extent *or character* of the clan "country" proved inadequate to support an increasing population. Before the eighteenth century Highland agriculture was primitive, but no less indispensable than to-day. At times cattle were virtually a currency. They were a normal medium of a bride's "tocher" or dowry. At the same time, it was the primary care of a Highland chief to ensure that as many of his clansmen as possible could thrive within their own "country." Inevitably this became more difficult. In 1689 the 17th Lochiel Chief was seriously concerned by the number of Camerons who had moved into Sunart and Ardnamurchan. This was not because he no longer received their meagre rents, but because their services as fighting men were not readily available at call. At the Battle of Killiecrankie he mustered 240 men only; 500 more from the outlying districts arrived three days afterwards. There can be no doubt that land-hunger was a very real incentive to the earlier feuds. Later, others became apparent, as chief and clansman alike became more "money-minded." Timber, for example, began to be a marketable asset, and in some places could be transported by water. But till 1746 the Camerons were essentially a patriarchy. Sentiment and self-interest were at one in making them so. It was adversity, not choice, that tempered them into warriors. Clan Gregor alone excepted, no major Highland clan trod a more troubled path, or was so harassed from without. The Crown was usually powerless to assist them, and the great Royal feudatories made conflicting claims upon their loyalty. They were virtually compelled to live by the sword. Small wonder, therefore, that the





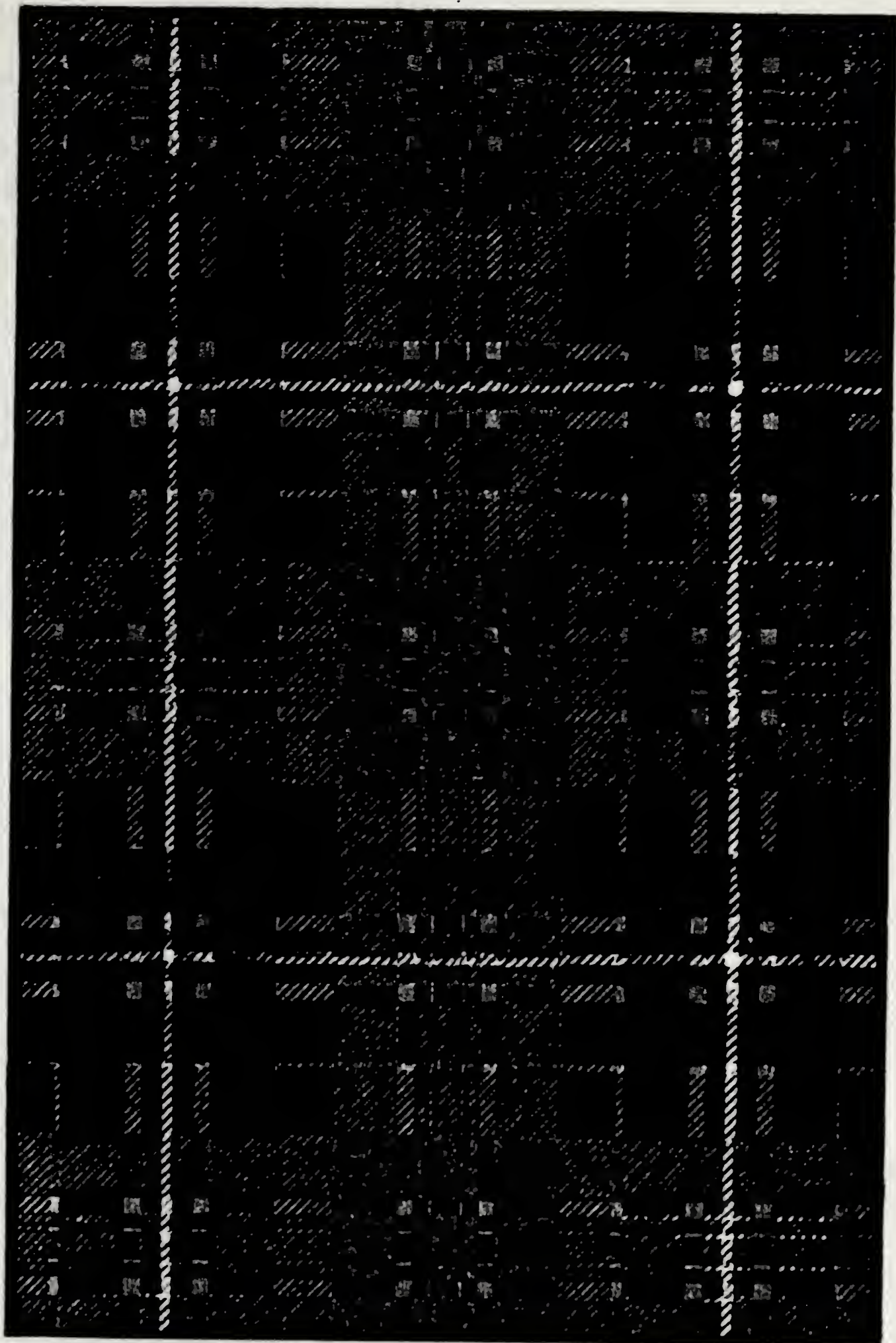
Cameron clan regiment in 1745 was reckoned a "*corps d'élite*" of the Jacobite army, or that their descendants in so many wars have been worthy of that regiment.

## II

THE Cameron "country," *as occupied by* the clan for the greater part of their history, lies in Lochaber,<sup>1</sup> at the foot of Glen Albyn, and on the east fringe of the region of old termed the "Rough Bounds." Latterly there were also numerous Camerons in Sunart, Ardnamurchan, and Rannoch. Within the Cameron country proper, the ancient MacMartin stock were on the east shore of Loch Lochy, where a strip about eight miles by three contains Letterfinlay, Mucomir, and Glen Gloy. To the S.-E., Glens Roy and Spean were the home of the MacDonalds of Keppoch. Between the rivers Lochy and Lundy were more Camerons, and a few miles farther to the S.-E., the MacSorlies of Glen Nevis. They, like the MacMartins, came to call themselves Camerons, but they did not invariably choose to muster with Lochiel. Farther south yet, the sea lochs Linnhe and Leven bound the Mamore peninsula, of which the east marches were long in dispute. Here were the Cameron cadet branches of Callart, Lundavra, and Cuilchenna, and the MacLachlans of Coruanan, Lochiel's hereditary standard-bearers. The Loch Eil lands—for by a comparatively modern convention the Chief's style and the loch are differently spelled—are a mere strip, a few miles in depth, running west from Banavie and Corpach along the north shore of the loch to Drumsallie. Here were the cadet branches

<sup>1</sup> See D. B. M'Culloch, *Romantic Lochaber* (Moray Press).





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PERSONAL ARMS OF CAMERON OF LOCHIEL,  
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of Fassiefern and Kinlocheil. To the south, across the loch, their neighbours were MacLeans; to the west, MacDonalds of Clan Ranald. All the territory so far described was important to the Camerons; indeed, essential to them. But it was for the other lands known loosely as "Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig" that they fought so desperately for three centuries and more. This loose description is more than a little misleading. The north march of these lands was the south shore of Loch Quoich, inclusive; the upper waters of the River Garry; and the watershed between Lochs Garry and Arkaig. To the west, the march was with Knoydart and Morar. Beyond both these marches was all MacDonald country. The Loch and River Lochy were the physical boundary to the east, and the Loch Eil lands, already defined, adjoined on the south.

Hence it will be observed that the Camerons were resolved at all costs to retain their occupation, not merely of Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig, but of Glen Kingie, Glendessary, Glen Pean, and Glen Mallic, with some other glens of lesser note. The extent of this whole region is roughly twelve miles from north to south, and sixteen from east to west. The Chiefs of Lochiel have always made their home within it, dwelling successively at Torcastle, on the River Lochy, and at Achnacarry, on the River Arkaig. The usual pattern of their cadet branches occurs—MacGillonies of Invermallie and Strone (whose status some would put higher than most cadets), and the families of Erracht, Glendessary, and Clunes.

A contoured map, but preferably a personal visit, will soon reveal something of the glories and hazards of the Cameron country. Most of it is over one thousand feet, and more than forty summits are twice as high, including Ben Nevis (4,406 feet—"Nevis" here possibly meaning "terrible"), the highest mountain in Britain. The glens





are mostly steep and narrow, and their rivers and burns swift. Lochs Arkaig and Lochy are each nearly a mile wide, and about twelve and ten miles long, respectively. Loch Quoich excepted, other freshwater lochs are few and small. By sea, Upper Loch Linnhe and Loch Eil—both formerly known by the latter name—and Loch Leven were navigable with care by sailing ships, and can normally provide safe anchorage. They once were regularly visited by herring, and other fish besides. The land itself was ill-drained, and the soil mostly acid and poor. Heather, rushes, moss, and rank grass were ubiquitous. Anciently, and especially around Lochs Arkaig and Lochy, were large woods of birch, oak, and Scots pine, part of the old Caledonian forest. A remnant survives yet, and new plantations are replacing timber that has perforce been felled. The woods and hills held plenty of red deer and roe ; the waters abounded with salmon and trout. The eagle and the raven, the wild cat, the fox, and the otter, are there still. Many more curious creatures are now extinct. The last wolf is said to have been killed about 1680, and probably by Lochiel himself. Until the eighteenth century the land knew neither potatoes nor root crops, nor was the moist Lochaber climate any kinder then to cereals than it is now. Sheep farming as we know it was not in evidence until well after 1746. Small horses and “ black cattle ” were indeed bred locally, and even the poorer folk mostly had a cow or two for each family. In 1677 two persons of substance, Martin Cameron of Letterfinlay and his brother John Roy, had between them 160 “ great cows ” and 70 “ young cows,” besides some horses and 220 sheep. Some of these beasts may *not* have been bred in Lochaber, where the demand for cattle always exceeded the local supply. The Camerons’ great reputation as “ lifters ” of other folks’ livestock, even from distant Moray, was not





earned without cause. We must not shut our eyes to the fact that in those days the productivity of land and sea barely sufficed to support the people of Lochaber, and that the standard of living was very low. The writer cannot of course condone the sorrowful evictions of which Lochaber had its share, but he has no wish to revive here an ancient and bitter controversy. Rather would he draw attention to the prosperity that in various ways has now come to most people in Lochaber. He thinks it but fair to suggest that the devoted public services long rendered by the present Lochiel's father and grandfather were directed to just such an end.

Anciently the communications between Lochaber and the rest of Scotland were primitive. Traders, but more often invaders, could sail readily enough to the Inverlochy shore. Doubtless this was how, or why, a feudal lord came to erect the old castle there in the thirteenth century. Still unfinished 400 years later, it is now a picturesque ruin that looks rather out of place. But neither traders nor invaders, nor anyone else, could take a wheeled vehicle about the Cameron country before General George Wade, between 1725 and 1732, built a road from Fort William to Inverness. In the latter year he made another between Fort Augustus and Dalwhinnie in Badenoch. By 1757 Fort William was connected with Stirling (and hence with Edinburgh and Glasgow), via Kinlochleven and King's House. About the same time, if not several years earlier, a short road was driven through Glen Gloy to join the Fort Augustus-Dalwhinnie road at Garvamore. There is now no *through* route here for vehicles. Before these highways were made, the whole Cameron country was in a state of "splendid isolation," served only by bridle paths or worse. Fords, sometimes impassable and often dangerous, did duty for bridges, though occasionally a narrow chasm might have





a tree trunk wedged across it. There were ferries at the more obvious places, such as Corran. This awkward state of things does not seem to have daunted such indefatigable travellers as clerics or warriors, but decidedly tended to shield the Camerons from external contacts. Longer and more tenaciously than most, they cherished simple beliefs and patriarchal loyalties.

To-day a part of Lochaber's activity is industrial, and much use is made of hydro-electric power. To this, and to the vastly improved communications of the past century or so, the Burgh of Fort William (*pop. c. 3,000*) and the village of Inverlochy (*pop. 1,196*) owe most of their prosperity. The origin of the Burgh was from the erection of a temporary fortress by General George Monck in 1654, known at the time as the "Garrison of Inverlochy." Its primary purpose was to daunt the Camerons. In 1690 General Hugh Mackay of Scourie, whose own troops the Camerons had most effectively daunted at Killicrankie in the previous year, replaced Monck's fortress by a smaller stone structure, which he named "Fort William" after King William III. It mounted fifteen twelve-pounder cannon, and had permanent accommodation for about a hundred soldiers, though it could, and did, hold ten times that number on occasion. The village which grew up beside it was first named "Maryburgh," after William III's Queen. It was mostly destroyed in February 1746 during the military operations preceding an unsuccessful Jacobite siege of the Fort.<sup>1</sup> It was soon rebuilt, and since it stood on land owned by the Duke of Gordon, was sometimes named "Gordonsburgh" towards the end of the eighteenth century. When Sir Duncan Cameron of Fassiefern bought out the Gordon rights, about 1834, he chose to call it "Duncansburgh." But the name Fort William was popularly applied to the village before then,

<sup>1</sup> See Sir J. Fergusson, *Argyll in the Forty-Five* (Faber & Faber, 1951).





and it was by that name that it was officially recognised as a Burgh in 1874. One only of the Burgh's attractions can be mentioned here—the West Highland Museum, sited, appropriately enough, in Cameron Square. Within this too modest building are many rare treasures illustrative of the history of Lochaber and the Western Highlands. No reader of this book, who has the opportunity, should fail to see them.

### III

THERE is little reliable evidence as to the identity of the dominant rulers in Lochaber before the fourteenth century. It would appear that in the twelfth century the great Somerled, progenitor of the Lords of the Isles, had a footing there ; and that after his death in 1164, his descendants were certainly possessed of lands near by. The boundaries of Lochaber in these early times were indefinite, and certainly differ from those which we accept to-day. It does seem, however, that for some considerable time before the Battle of Bannockburn (1314), the guardians of the Great Glen of Albyn were a branch of the then immensely powerful House of Comyn. It is quite possible that they built the old castle of Inverlochy. What has long been called Comyn's Tower there must have been new in 1306, when all Comyns became The Bruce's implacable enemies. After Bannockburn they vanish from Glen Albyn, and in Lochaber, Angus Og MacDonald, Lord of the Isles, and The Bruce's friend, rules in their stead. Clan Donald branches spread fast and far, and must have absorbed a good number of the earlier inhabitants. Until the *de facto* forfeiture of the Lord





of the Isles in 1493 most, if not all, were his supporters. But long before the forfeiture the progenitors and founders of other clans appear in Lochaber. Among these clans is the Clan Chattan. It is claimed that in 1291 their Chief, Gilpatric or Dougall Dall, gave in marriage his only daughter and heiress, Eva, to Angus Mackintosh, 6th Chief of Mackintosh, who thereupon became also the 7th Chief of Clan Chattan. *The Mackintoshes further claim that in virtue of this marriage the lands of Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig passed to their Chiefs.*

Like the Lord of the Isles, Angus Mackintosh was a loyal supporter of The Bruce. Already possessed, in his own right, of lands near Inverness, he was rewarded in 1319 with further lands in Badenoch. Shortly thereafter, it is said that a considerable migration of the Clan Chattan took place from Lochaber into Badenoch. Since later Cameron and Mackintosh traditions agree that the age-long feud between their clans began in the fourteenth century, it seems clear that by then the Camerons were invading, if not actually occupying, Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig. But who, and whence, are the Camerons?

There seems no doubt that their progenitors were at this time technically vassals of the Lord of the Isles. Some hold that they were of the same stock as Clan Chattan, but the MacSorlies of Glen Nevis at least would certainly seem to have been of Clan Donald descent. The wording of a charter to one of them, granted by John of Islay, Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, at Dingwall, on 20th April, 1456, makes that much clear. Ancient Gaelic pedigrees, and some English ones of later date, are by modern critical standards inconclusive. The views of Dr. W. F. Skene (1809–1892) remain of interest.<sup>1</sup> Some would derive the name Cameron from the Gaelic

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, Vol. III (Edinburgh, David Douglas, 1880).





“*Cam-shron*” or “wry-nose” of an early chief. It is not until the fifteenth century that we find the term “the Clancamroun” in written Scots.

As far as the House of Lochiel is concerned, there is also a tradition that they are descended from the marriage of a MacMartin heiress and a member of the distinguished knightly family of Cambrun or Cambron (the spelling varies) which held lands in Fife, Perth, Angus, and Aberdeenshire in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A “Johannes Cambrun” of this family was a signatory to the famous “Declaration of Arbroath” addressed to Pope John XXII by the representatives of the Scottish nation on 6th April 1320. It is notable that the seals of these medieval Cambruns display the same “three bars” borne later on their armorial shields by the Chiefs of Lochiel. Early in the fifteenth century we have positive evidence of a most formidable Lochaber warrior named Donald “Dubh” (*the Dark-haired, or Swarthy*). In the traditional Lochiel genealogy he is reckoned the eleventh Chief of Clan Cameron. He is indisputably a progenitor of the present family of Lochiel, and it is from him that the Chief of that House, and of the Camerons, derives his Gaelic patronymic of *MacDhòmnuill Duibh*. His son Allan is termed “the Captain of the Clancamroun.” We see, therefore, though perhaps not as clearly as we would wish, that in the fourteenth century the Camerons may well have been in a position to defy the Mackintosh claim to Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig. In 1370 they raided Badenoch. It is by no means improbable that they were the opponents of the Clan Chattan in the celebrated battle of gladiators on the North Inch of Perth in 1396, before King Robert III and his Court. In 1411, Donald Dubh and Malcolm, 10th Chief of Mackintosh, fought as allies at “Red Harlaw” in the army of Donald, Lord of the Isles. In 1429, again as allies, both supported





King James I against another Lord of the Isles, Donald's son Alexander, who was defeated and captured at a battle in Lochaber. In 1430, Camerons and Mackintoshes were at each other's throats. Next year, at Inverlochy, a cousin of the captive Lord of the Isles, named Donald Balloch, totally defeated a Royal Army. He then harried, indiscriminately but effectually, Camerons and Mackintoshes alike. Eventually another Royal Army drove him from the country. The King compensated Mackintosh by a grant of the MacDonald territory of Glen Roy and Glen Spean, but apparently either could not or would not compensate the Camerons. He then liberated the Lord of the Isles, and in 1436 recognised his claim to be Earl of Ross. In 1437 the King was assassinated at Perth. His son and heir, James II, was then a boy of seven. In 1438 the Lord of the Isles was appointed Justiciar of the whole of Scotland north of the Forth. He confirmed Mackintosh in his possession of Glen Roy and Glen Spean, and bestowed on him the heritable Stewardship over the whole of Lochaber. These actions intensified the Cameron-Mackintosh feud, besides involving the Mackintoshes in another with their MacDonald tenants in Brae Lochaber. The Justiciar further complicated matters by granting to certain MacLeans some Cameron-occupied lands on Loch Eil. On this occasion the MacGillonie Camerons are said to have been induced to support the MacLeans, but the remaining Camerons opposed the MacLeans so vigorously that they abandoned their attempt to gain possession. Their rights in respect of these lands were assumed by Celestine MacDonald of Lochalsh, the Justiciar's younger son. Well over a century later one of the MacLean charters in respect of Loch Eil turned up in the Earl of Argyll's charter-chest—a most inconvenient repository for the Camerons of that time. In 1449 the Justiciar died.





In 1491 his grandson, Alexander “of the Isles of Lochalsh,” raised a formidable rebellion in the north. Next year, possibly for services rendered, Alexander gave to Donald Dubh’s grandson, Ewen Cameron, 13th Chief, lands in Lochalsh and Loch Eil. In 1493 the power of Clan Donald was broken, but two years later James IV confirmed Ewen in the Loch Eil lands. In 1497, and 1503–6, Camerons were still fighting with Mackintoshes, and round about 1500, with MacLeans also. It is said that in 1513 Ewen was with his Sovereign on Flodden Field, and took no hurt. In 1527, since the Mackintoshes were for the time being in disfavour at Court, James V *granted to Ewen the lands of Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig*. In 1528 all his lands were erected into the Barony of Loch Eil, and he was given “half the Bailiary of Lochaber.” On this account Ewen is the first Cameron Chief to use the style “of Locheil.” In 1531–6 Ewen got further charters to Lochaber lands, including Inverlochy, Torlundy, and Letterfinlay. Such bounty could not, unfortunately, bring the Camerons either economic or political salvation, nor did it continue. In 1542 James V died in his Palace of Falkland, and a girl seven days old became Sovereign of Scotland. Around her the realm was brought almost to ruin, and to the cupidity of Councillors and the peril of foreign intrigue were conjoined the horrors of religious strife.

## IV

THE Cameron–Mackintosh feud continued fitfully for another century. During this time the Chiefs of both clans received charters according them various lands and rights in Lochaber. These were sometimes





conflicting, but on the whole it would be true to say that the Mackintoshes built up a strong legal claim to Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig. Anything resembling a lasting physical occupation of these lands they could never establish.

In 1544 Lochaber was profoundly concerned with the outcome of a dispute about the MacDonald Chieftainship of Moidart. This affair superficially ended with the Battle of Blar-na-Leine, but the Earl of Huntly decided otherwise. He denounced the victorious MacDonald and his allies as traitors. Two of the latter were the aged Ewen Cameron of Lochiel and Ranald MacDonald of Keppoch. Both were captured by William, 15th Chief of Mackintosh, and handed over to Huntly, who had them beheaded at Elgin in 1547. Three years later, for personal reasons, Huntly seized Mackintosh and made away with *him*.

No one can tax the House of Huntly with indecision—nor the House of Argyll either. The Camerons were now to endure much from both, for their “country” was, as it were, wedged between the Gordon and the Campbell interests. These interests were great rivals, and their political and religious complexion differed, but both were immensely ambitious. And during the next hundred years or so, one or the other contrived to acquire or to control the superiorities of most of the Cameron lands. For Lochiel and his clan this was a most serious matter. An efficient patriarchy, if it is to survive, must maintain discipline and administer justice among its members. This the Highland Chiefs had long effected through their own “patriarchal” clan courts. The possessor of a feudal superiority over a chief was obliged by the Law of Scotland to impose his own “feudal” courts and administration upon all the inhabitants in the clan country. This was a direct challenge





to the patriarchal authority of the chief, nor is there any reason to suppose that an offender received fairer treatment in a "feudal" court. The Chiefs of Mackintosh on several occasions attempted to exercise their *feudal* authority in Lochaber. Cameron clan sentiment was solidly with Allan, 16th Chief of Lochiel, when he forcibly prevented Mackintosh, in 1616, from holding courts in the Cameron country. The Keppoch MacDonalds actually deposed one of their chiefs who surrendered a clansman to Mackintosh, acting at the time in his feudal capacity as Steward of Lochaber. But the fact remains that this natural resistance to feudal control was contrary to the Law. Mackintoshes might be repelled with success, but the time was coming when either Huntly or Argyll could bring greater pressure to bear upon the Camerons. It is not possible here to do more than indicate this issue ; the details must be sought elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Sir Ewen's *Memoirs* were written in 1737, only eighteen years after his death, and by a relative. It is a fascinating book, though clumsy to handle. Miss Cunningham's learned history devotes a good deal of space to the social and political effects of Highland feudal superiorities.

Sir Ewen Cameron, 17th Chief of Lochiel—for he was knighted about 1682—was born in 1629, in a Campbell castle, and of a Campbell mother. His grandfather was Allan, 16th Chief. He spent his childhood in his own Cameron country, and for seven years was "fostered" by MacMartin Cameron of Letterfinlay. When he was about twelve, his family were induced, not without some reluctance, to send him to Inveraray to the Earl of Argyll, who "suspected that his education might be

<sup>1</sup> J. Drummond, *Memoirs of Sir Ewen Cameron of Locheill* (Maitland Club, Edinburgh, 1842) ; A. Cunningham, *The Loyal Clans* (Cambridge U.P., 1932).





neglected " otherwise. He was therefore in Argyll's hands during Montrose's campaign. This did not deter Ewen's grandfather from sending 300 Camerons to Montrose before the Battle of Inverlochy, nor from watching Argyll's defeat, and warmly congratulating his conqueror. Some months later Argyll set out for England, taking Ewen with him with the intention of settling him at Oxford University. They got no farther than Berwick, and turned back. After Montrose's defeat at Philiphaugh in September 1645, the Covenanters took many Royalist prisoners. Some of the more important were reserved for public execution in Glasgow and St. Andrews. At the latter place, Parliament was convened, and Argyll, with Ewen, was there. Unknown to Argyll, curiosity prompted Ewen to visit the doomed Royalists on the eve of their execution. One of them, Sir Robert Spottiswoode, proved to be an old family friend. Together they spent "several hours" in earnest conversation. Still unaware of the occurrence, next day Argyll took Ewen with him to see the prisoners executed. They died bravely, and the boy was moved to tears. From that moment he was a King's man for ever.

Meanwhile his father had died, and in 1647 his grandfather died also. Ewen was now the 17th Chief, and the Camerons called for his return. Argyll did not withhold him. The rest of Ewen's long life is a brilliant story of loyalty to his Sovereign, devotion to his clan, and personal courage in battle. Within five years of his return he saw Charles I and Montrose executed, Charles II in exile, three Scottish armies destroyed, and Scotland occupied by English soldiers. But when the last Royalists in the field still fought a hopeless fight in the Highlands, Lochiel and his Camerons were with them. This so provoked Cromwell that in 1654 he sent General George Monck by sea to Inverlochy with a large force. There



"The Great Gatsby" is a novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald, published in 1925. It is set in the summer of 1925 in West Egg, Long Island. The story is told by Nick Carraway, a young man from the Midwest who has moved to New York City to work in the bond business. He is married to Jay Gatsby, a wealthy man who has lost his fortune and is now trying to win back the love of his former mistress, Daisy Buchanan. The novel is a critique of the American Dream and the excesses of the 1920s.

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Monck at once began erecting an earth-work fortress, which he garrisoned strongly. For a year Ewen fought a guerilla war with the garrison. On one occasion, locked in close combat with an English officer somewhere near Achdaliu, he was compelled to kill his opponent by biting out his throat. But the odds against the Camerons were too great, and Monck arranged Ewen's submission on most honourable and unusual terms. Nowhere in them does Cromwell's name appear, and the Camerons were not disarmed. They had need of all the arms they could hold, for when the Inverlochy garrison left, at the Restoration, the Mackintoshes revived their claim to Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig. In 1662-3 Lachlan, 19th Chief of Mackintosh, obtained the sanction of the Privy Council to back the claim, and in September 1665 he invaded the Cameron lands with a composite force of 1500 men. Ewen collected 1200—including 300 armed with *bows*, and some MacGregor and MacDonald volunteers—and prepared to make desperate resistance. Suddenly Argyll intervened. He sent John Campbell, yr., of Glenorchy (later 1st Earl of Breadalbane) to negotiate, with 300 armed men at his back. Young Glenorchy was cousin to both the disputing chiefs, and one of the most skilled "negotiators" of his day. On 20th September, 1665, Ewen bought Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig from Mackintosh for a sum roughly equivalent to four thousand pounds sterling. This money Argyll paid, on condition that Ewen and his successors held Glen Loy and Loch Arkaig under *him*, rendered a token annual feu-duty, and agreed to provide 100 men under arms when required. It seems unlikely that this last proviso was in fact implemented. So ended this feud of centuries.

When Argyll was executed as a rebel in 1685, Sir Ewen had further trouble about superiorities with the House of Huntly (after 1684 identified with the Dukedom of





Gordon). The King personally intervened in Sir Ewen's favour. James II and his Chief Minister in Scotland, Viscount Tarbat, were well aware of the dangerous implications of Highland superiorities. Tarbat even prepared a scheme for their purchase by the Crown, but this was stifled by the vested interests concerned.

The Revolution of 1688 summoned Sir Ewen and his clan again to arms. They joined Viscount Dundee's army in 1689, and played a prominent part in the barren victory of Killiecrankie, where they lost half their strength. In 1706 Sir Ewen prudently made his property over to his grandson, Donald. Thus his elder son, John (reckoned 18th Chief), was free to take the clan "out" in the "Fifteen." They saw little enough fighting, but John was forfeited and exiled, and never returned to Lochaber. In 1719 Sir Ewen died, aged ninety. His grandson, Donald, later 19th Chief, was then already virtually such. He is better known as the "Gentle Lochiel." He is thought to have been born about 1695. His mother and his wife were both Campbells. The scant evidence now available indicates that he took a close personal interest in his people and his property, and had progressive ideas about estate management. He attempted some systematic forestry at Achnacarry between 1720 and 1745, as well as some "amenity" planting. Most of the trees of his famous "Beech Avenue" may still be seen there, though not displayed as he had planned them to be. In 1745 they were young plants, "heeled" into a trench alongside the River Arkaig, preparatory to being planted out. The landing of Prince Charles Edward, and Lochiel's decision to support him, prevented their removal. The trees grew up close together where they stood in the trench, a unique and pathetic memorial to their owner's personal sacrifice.

Though his reputation is truly "Gentle," this Lochiel





could be stern in his efforts to wean his clan from the old lawless ways. The draft exists of a lease by him, dated at Achnacarry, 24th October, 1727, to Donald Cameron, Annat. The subjects leased include the ferry at Annat, which is probably why a penalty clause is inserted, to operate if the lessee, or any of his sub-tenants, servants, or cottars "*shall be guilty or suspected guilty . . . of thieving, harbouring or recepting Thieves or Stolen Goods.*" If anyone, within a single lifetime, could have successfully guided his disordered inheritance into the ways of peace and progress, that man was the "Gentle Lochiel." Commanding the respect and affection still paid to a patriarchal chief, his example was followed in peace as in war. But his principles, undoubtedly against his better judgement, impelled him to put his all in jeopardy for the Jacobite cause. Unlike some chiefs, he was too sensitive to be indifferent to the consequences which his own political action might, and did, impose upon his clan. We know that later, when he himself was a wounded fugitive, he was deeply moved by their sufferings. We know also that at least two of his brothers were after the same mould ; Archibald, the doctor, and Alexander, the Jesuit priest. Humane and scholarly men, they spent the greater part of their lives in their beloved Highlands, quietly fulfilling their duty, as they saw it, towards their fellow-men. The one died on the Tyburn scaffold ; the other, barbarously treated, in a prison ship in the Thames.

The story of the "Gentle Lochiel" and the Camerons in the "Forty-Five" requires a book to itself.<sup>1</sup> Without their initiative and example, that campaign might have been even shorter and more inglorious than the "Fifteen." They were among the first to join the Prince. Their

<sup>1</sup> See D. K. Broster's novels, *The Flight of the Heron* and *The Gleam in the North* (Heinemann) ; R. Chambers, *History of the Rebellion of 1745-6*, *passim*.







fighting strength of about 800 took part in every major engagement, and sustained severe loss—their total casualties have been estimated at 300.<sup>1</sup> At Culloden, Lochiel was wounded by grapeshot in both ankles. Achnacarry and many of his tenants' houses were burned, his estate forfeited, and he and his family ruined and exiled. He died in France in 1748. The Camerons were savagely treated. Yet as soon as new Highland Regiments were created, there was no lack of Cameron recruits. A number joined the two Regiments of "Fraser's Highlanders" of 1757 and 1775. But the Camerons' own Regiment was born in 1793, when Major Alan Cameron of Erracht raised in Lochaber itself the 79th Cameron Highlanders (since 10th July, 1873. designated "The *Queen's Own* Cameron Highlanders"). Inverness-shire is justly proud of this famous Regiment and of its affiliated Highland Battalions overseas. Many who have served and are serving in both are of Cameron blood, and all are Camerons by adoption. Reference must not be omitted to the no less gallant band of Camerons who in 1794 and subsequently joined the 92nd Gordon Highlanders with Captain John Cameron of Fassiefern. He was killed as their Colonel at Quatre Bras, on 16th June, 1815, and his body now lies in Kilmallie Churchyard, near Corpach.

The Lochiel Estates were restored to the family in 1784. Achnacarry was rebuilt (though by no means completed) about 1802, and for many a year the Lochiel chiefs have there welcomed their clansfolk from at home and abroad. Donald, 24th Chief, cared deeply for all things Highland, and played a conspicuous part in national as well as local affairs. He was Member of Parliament for Inverness-shire from 1868 until 1885, and was later prominent in local government. Only those

<sup>1</sup> *The Lyon in Mourning*, Vol. II. p. 380 (Scot. Hist. Soc. 1895).





who knew him, or who have read his shrewd comments upon matters of public interest, can realise the extent of his wisdom in regard to Highland affairs. As a young man he was in the Diplomatic Service, and the knowledge he thus gained was obviously valuable to him later. He was Lord Lieutenant of Inverness-shire from 1887 until his death in 1905.

His elder son, Donald Walter, 25th Chief, worthily maintained the tradition of public service inherited from his father. Bred a soldier, he served with the Grenadier Guards in the South African War, where he was severely wounded. On the outbreak of World War I he was commanding the 3rd Bn. Q.O. Cameron Highlanders. On 21st August, 1914, he was personally summoned to the War Office by Lord Kitchener, then Secretary of State for War, and asked to raise a new "Service" battalion of Cameron Highlanders by his own direct appeal. Lochiel agreed at once, but made three characteristic stipulations. First, that he might form a nucleus for the new battalion from his present one; secondly, that the men he raised should serve together with their friends, and not be liable to be drafted to any other unit; and lastly, that he himself should command them and share their fate. On receiving an assurance on all these points, he launched his appeal by a letter to the *Scotsman* and the *Glasgow Herald* dated 25th August, in which he invited Highland and Clan Societies in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and elsewhere, to act as his recruiting agents. They responded so well, and such was the power of the recruiting slogan "*Join Lochiel's Camerons*," that not only did he complete his battalion (the 5th Camerons) early in September, but he was asked to raise another. Thus the 6th Camerons came into being, to be quickly followed by the 7th Bn. Others were added later. Lochiel took his own





5th Bn. to France in May 1915. Alas ! this splendid body of men was almost destroyed at Loos on 25th-27th September of that year, but they died victorious. Lochiel remained in command until March 1916, when his health gave way ; but he continued to serve throughout the war, being mentioned in despatches. He was made a C.M.G. in 1916, was A.D.C. to the King 1920-43, and in 1934 was created a Knight of the Thistle. In 1939 he became, like his father, Lord-Lieutenant of Inverness-shire. For many years he was a most active member of the Inverness-shire County Council, and was Convener of it at the time of his deeply lamented death in October 1951. He was succeeded as 26th Chief by his elder son, Lieutenant-Colonel Donald Hamish Cameron of Lochiel, who served in World War II with the Lovat Scouts, being mentioned in despatches. He is married, and has one son, Donald Angus, and two daughters.

The Cameron country has seen many changes since 1746, but Lochiel still possesses a large part of it. Though for Camerons their old patriarchal life may be said to have died with the " Gentle Lochiel," the Cameron name and blood are now to be found in almost every quarter of the world, and in every profession, vocation, and pursuit. The writer is therefore acutely aware that in the strictly limited space at his disposal he has done much less than justice to their activities. As a Highlander and a student of Highland history, without a drop of Cameron blood in him, he is proud to say of the Camerons that their record nobly exemplifies their own chiefs' family mottoes—" *Unite* " and " *For King and Country.* "





## Names associated with the Clan Cameron

Chalmers	MacChlery	MacOurlie	MacWalrick
Clark	MacGillonie	MacPhail	Martin
Clarke	Macildowie	MacSorley	Paul
Clarkson	MacKail	MacSorlie	Sorley
Clerk	Maclerie	MacUlric	Sorlie
Kennedy	MacMartin	Macvail	Taylor
MacChlerich	MacOnie		

*Note.*—Some of the above names are also associated with other clans.

Certain families named MacLachlan, MacMillan, and MacPhee, were long settled in the Cameron country, and rendered loyal service to Lochiel and his kin.

A man described as "Ewen M'Cay or Mackvee *alias* Cameron," a native of Lochiel's country, was captured in Ross-shire in October 1746, carrying documents written in French, without either direction or subscription. He was obviously a Jacobite courier, and we now know that a French warship was then off Poolewe. He was sent to Inverness, where every effort was made to induce him to divulge information about his contacts. He received 500 lashes, which were repeated some days later. He absolutely refused to divulge anything, and in November died of his maltreatment. "*Being carryed to the grave by two or three beggars, a sogar went and thrust his bayonet several times into the body to try (as he said) if the rebell was dead.*" (*The Lyon in Mourning*, Vol. II., pp. 300-301.)

## Miscellaneous Clan Notes

*Lochiel's Arms*

Seals of Camerons in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries display the "Three Bars" of Lochiel's present shield. In 1678 the seal of Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel (1629-1719) has a quarterly coat, viz. : (1) a lymphad ; (2) a sinister hand ; (3) three bars ; (4) a lion rampant. Crest, motto, and supporters are lacking. His successors have borne on their shields three bars only. For some reason now obscure, the shield recorded for Lochiel in Lyon Register in 1795 had *two* gold bars instead of *three*, and this mistaken version has been reproduced in printed books and elsewhere. The Register entry was amended to three bars in 1934. There is evidence that at least until 1746 the crest of the "Gentle Lochiel" (?1695-1748) was an arm holding a sword, with the motto "*Pro Rege et Patria.*" In 1753 his son John used a crest consisting of a sheaf of five arrows, with the motto "*Unite.*" The supporting savages, wreathed with oak and bearing Lochaber axes are on record in 1730.





*Badge*

Darag (Oak), or Dearca fithich (Crowberry). As yet no definite Clan Cameron plant badge has been found before the nineteenth century. Attention is, however, drawn to the *Oak* wreaths of Lochiel's "supporters." Sobieski Stuart's *Vestiarium Scoticum*, published in 1842, gives the Cameron badge as "Black whortleberry," a plant somewhat resembling Crowberry.

*Slogan or War-Cry*

Traditionally, "*Chlanna nan con thigibh a so's gheibh sibh fèoil*"—"Sons of the hounds, come here and get flesh."

*Standard-Bearer and Banner*

Tradition has long affirmed that Lochiel's hereditary standard-bearer was MacLachlan of Coruanan, in Mamore. In 1877 a member of this family, Miss Janet MacLachlan, then living in Edinburgh, wrote to the 24th Lochiel to say that she was about to join her sisters in Canada, and on that account offering him what she terms "the Cameron colours," saved from Culloden in 1746 by her forebear. In her letter she also states that "Lochiel had them at the time the Lochaber Fencibles were raised" (1799). Her offer was naturally accepted, and the "colours" are proudly displayed in Achnacarry. Surrounded by a faded red fabric almost exactly 7 feet by 5 feet is a piece of material 2 feet 6 inches wide by 2 feet 7½ inches deep, now of a faded green. Upon this material is painted Lochiel's complete armorial "achievement." Details of the shield are barely decipherable, though traces of "bars" remain; the crest is an arm holding a sword, and the motto "*Pro Rege et Patria*."

*Tartans*

The "Clan Cameron" sett depicted here is the only Cameron tartan in the *Vestiarium Scoticum*. No earlier independent record of it has yet been traced.

The "Lochiel" sett depicted is that used for "dress" wear by the chief and his family. It bears some similarity to the sett in an eighteenth-century portrait of the "Gentle Lochiel," by an unknown artist, in the West Highland Museum, Fort William. A second portrait of the "Gentle Lochiel," formerly at Callart House, is now at Achnacarry. The artist was Sir George Chalmers (d. 1791), and since the portrait is dated 1764, sixteen years after Lochiel's death, it is presumed to be a copy of an earlier likeness. The sett of tartan in it differs somewhat from that of the Fort William portrait, though red is prominent in both. The Captain of Dunstaffnage has inherited an interesting "conversation piece" from the Camerons of Fassiefern, probably painted about 1783-6. In this the three young sons of Ewen Cameron, 2nd of Fassiefern (d. 1828) are dressed alike in tartan kilts. The sett here is a simple check of red and a darker hue—possibly green.

The "Erracht or 79th Tartan" was especially devised for the 79th





Cameron Highlanders, and has been worn by this famous Regiment ever since they received their distinctive uniform in 1794, shortly after their embodiment.

## Clan Music

The following notes have been largely contributed by Mr. Archibald Campbell of Kilberry, to whom the writer is as grateful as he hopes the reader will also be.

Clan Cameron is rich in Ceol Mor, or ancient Piobaireachd music. The tunes dealt with are nearly all of that character. At least the first four all appear to have a claim to the title "The Camerons' Gathering." Numerous other marches, strathspeys, and reels, relative directly or indirectly to the clan or to the 79th Cameron Highlanders, will be found, for example, in David Glen's *Collection of Highland Bagpipe Music* (Edinburgh, 1876-1901).

### 1. *Ceann na Drochaide Mòire, or the End of the Great Bridge*

This has long been regarded as a Cameron tune. Donald MacDonald, in his book on pipe music published in 1822, states that it was composed in the midst of the first Battle of Inverlochy [1431], where Donald Balloch [MacDonald] of the Isles was victorious, and the Camerons, though not actually engaged, were on the losing side. Other objections apart, it is doubtful whether the piobaireachd convention had then been developed. Some have identified the "Great Bridge" with General Wade's "High Bridge" over the River Spean, completed in 1736. The Dell of Mucomir, two miles to the N.-W. thereof, was where the Camerons mustered with Dundee's army, 26th-27th May, 1689.

### 2. *Ceann na Drochaide Bìge, or The End of the Little Bridge*

Donald MacDonald notes that this tune was composed "On the Battle of Inverlochy, 1645." The victorious Montrose was indeed supported by 300 Camerons. In an unpublished MS. note to his Canntaireachd book of 1828, Captain Neil MacLeod of Gesto says that the tune was played by MacLeod of MacLeod's piper to incite a party of Camerons to follow him and some of his own clan across a bridge, to attack a common enemy, from which fact both MacLeods and Camerons claimed the tune as their Gathering or Battle Tune. Gesto derived his information from Iain Dubh MacCrimmon (d. 1822). A "Low Bridge" over the River Gloy was completed by General Wade in 1732, but Lochiel and MacLeod of MacLeod were on opposite sides in the "Forty-Five."

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### 3. *Piobaireachd Dhomnuill Duibh, or Black Donald's March*

Donald MacDonald, followed by Angus Mackay (1838), names this tune in English "Black Donald of the Isles' March to the First Battle of Inverlochy 1427" [1431]. It is exceedingly doubtful if the piobaireachd convention was developed so early, and tradition is persistent that this is a Cameron tune. "The Camerons' Gathering" or "Lochiel's March" were favourite equivalents for it given by competitors as early as 1785. On Iain Dubh MacCrimmon's authority, Captain Neil MacLeod of Gesto in 1815 called it "Pioberach Dhomnuill Duibh or Camerons' Gathering." In that year the author of *Albyn's Anthology*, Alexander Campbell (1764-1824) visited Gesto while touring the Highlands in search of material for his work. Gesto gave him a version of this tune in Canntaireachd, or syllabic notation. This Campbell translated with approximate accuracy, and used later as the foundation of an air for the well-known song written in 1816 by Sir Walter Scott. This air, with subsequent minor alterations, became the basis of the quickstep march, "Pibroch of Donald Dubh or Lochiel's March," now prominent in Highland Regimental music, and especially in that of the 79th Cameron Highlanders.

### 4. *Cruinneachadh nan Camshronach, or The Camerons' Gathering*

Two of the three records in which this tune is preserved, the MSS. of Angus Mackay (c. 1826-1840) and of Duncan Campbell (c. 1853) call it "Cruinneachadh na Fineachan or The Gathering of the Clans." In the third and oldest, Colin Campbell's Canntaireachd MS. (c. 1791), the name is in English, "Camerons' Gathering," and this was asserted to be the correct name by the sons of the famous piper Donald Cameron (1810-1868), of whom hereafter.

### 5. *Failte Ridire Eoghann Lochiall, or Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel's Salute*

Thus named by Angus Mackay, who notes in his published book (c. 1838) that the tune was composed to commemorate the skirmish [by Lochielside in 1654] in which Lochiel, struggling with an English officer, killed him by biting a mouthful out of his throat. Donald MacDonald in his MS. (1826) says that Sir Ewen was "the subject" of the tune, but calls it "Gu' do Buidheann Eoghan" ["Away to your tribe, Ewen"], adding that the clan, wearying for Sir Ewen's return from abroad, wrote him a letter "with the above Gaelic words, which is the name of this very sweet air."

### 6. *'S e do Beatha Eoghainn, or You're welcome, Ewen*

The first written record of this tune is in Angus MacArthur's MS., previous to 1800. The only link between it and Clan Cameron is Angus Mackay's addition of the word "Lochiel" after "Ewen" in the English translation of the title in his MS. (1826-1840).

### 7. *Failte Tighearna Oig Dhungallain, or The Young Laird of Dungallon's Salute*

Thus named by Angus Mackay, who notes that the tune is very old. The Campbell Canntaireachd MS. (c. 1791) terms it simply "Dungallon's Lament." The Camerons of Dungallon were a cadet branch of Lochiel.





8. *Donald Cameron*

A favourite "competition" march, composed by Hugh Mackay (1801-1864), Pipe-Major of the Stirlingshire Militia, in honour of a Cameron who was one of the most distinguished pipers of all historical time. He was born in Strathconon in 1810, and died in 1868. For much of his career he was piper to the Earl of Seaforth. His three sons, Colin, Alexander, and Keith, were all pipers of repute, but their musical talents died with them.

9. *The March of the Cameron Men*

A modern quickstep much in favour with the 79th Cameron Highlanders. It is adapted from a song, of which both the air and the words were composed in 1829 by Miss Mary Maxwell Campbell of Skerrington (1813-1886).

10. *Lochiel's away to France*

An older quickstep, possibly also adapted from a song. It was published by William Gunn in 1847 as a reel, and called "Mac a Bhodich Ladhric" ("The Hoof'd Carle's Son"), with "Lochiel's away to France" as an alternative name.

11. *Lochiel's Welcome to Glasgow*

A modern quickstep composed by Alexander Cameron (1843-1923), a son of Donald Cameron, *q.v.* No. 8 above. It has long been the belief of Glasgow citizens that the "Gentle Lochiel's" personal intervention saved their city from destruction by the retreating Jacobite army in December 1745.

12. *Lochaber No More*

Clan Cameron would seem to have no exclusive claim to this *tune*, which derives from a very old air. But some lines to be sung to it are attributed to Alexander MacGregor, or Drummond, of Balhadie, and are said to have been written, before 1704, in honour of Jean Cameron, a daughter of Sir Ewen Cameron, 17th of Lochiel. Rather similar lines will be found under the same name in Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*, c. 1725.



The first of the two papers is by Dr. J. H. Green, of the University of London, and is entitled "The Pathology of the Heart in the Presence of Aortic Stenosis." It is a paper of considerable interest, and one which will be read with much profit by all those who are concerned with the pathology of the heart.

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